

PUBLIC NOTICE

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, REGION IX

NOTICE OF OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON INTENT TO GRANT A LAND DISPOSAL RESTRICTION VARIANCE TO THE OAKLAND ARMY BASE IN ACCORDANCE WITH REQUIREMENTS OF 40 C.F.R. § 268.44

The United States Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX (“EPA”) is proposing to grant a site-specific treatment variance from the Land Disposal Restriction (“LDR”) standards for wastes from the former Oakland Army Base (“OARB”) that will be excavated as part of remediation of the OARB.

A portion or all of Building 1 at the former Oakland Army Base overlies the site of a pre-1941 waste oil reclamation operation. The disposal of this operation’s oily and acidic clay wastes at the site have resulted in an area of buried contamination identified for the remedial actions recommended in the Draft Remedial Action Plan (“RAP”) proposed by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (“DTSC”). Based on the available test results, the Army believes that some volume (approximately 9000 tons) of Building 1 Remediation Wastes will display the hazardous toxicity characteristic for lead and/or corrosivity. Some samples of Building 1 Remediation Wastes also contained polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (“PAHs”), polychlorinated dibenzodioxins (“PCDDs”), polychlorinated dibenzofurans (“PCDFs”), and polychlorinated biphenyls (“PCBs”) at levels for which those constituents would exceed the “universal treatment standards” (“UTS”) under the LDR program.

Under 40 C.F.R. § 268.44(h), EPA allows facilities to apply for a site-specific variance in cases where the treatment of remediation waste to the specified level or by the specified method is environmentally inappropriate because it would likely discourage aggressive remediation. There are other grounds for obtaining LDR treatment variances, but this is the provision relevant to the present petition. Under the LDR program, the treatment standards applicable to the Building 1 Remediation Wastes would require that these wastes be incinerated to treat the PAHs, PCDDs, PCDFs, and PCBs, and then stabilized for the lead. This treatment scenario is not a viable option because of the difficulties associated with technical and regulatory implementability as well as cost. Therefore, the applicant will likely choose a remedial alternative in which the Building 1 Remediation Wastes remains at the OARB (e.g., construct an on-site landfill or place a cap over the waste.) The applicant prefers to use the LDR variance to facilitate the disposal of Building 1 Remediation Wastes at an off-site permitted secure chemical landfill.

The current proposed alternative treatment standard is the application of a solidification/stabilization technology to reduce the mobility of lead and other underlying hazardous constituents present in the Building 1 Remediation Wastes. Under this proposal, the solidification/stabilization agent will also neutralize the Building 1 Remediation Wastes’ acidic and liquid properties, in that the Building 1 Remediation Wastes will not have a pH of less than 4 or a moisture content greater than 50 percent by weight. The goal of such treatment is to reduce the concentrations of lead by 50 to 90 percent as measured in the extract of the Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (“TCLP”). Lead has been selected as the indicator compound. Under the proposal, performance will be determined by measuring the concentration of TCLP lead before and after applying the treatment technology to the Building 1 Remediation Wastes.

EPA recognizes that 50 to 90 percent reduction in TCLP lead is a goal that may not be achieved given the unique characteristics of the Building 1 Remediation Wastes. The actual percent reduction in TCLP lead that can be achieved under this proposed approach will be established through bench-scale treatability studies that will be conducted during design of remedial actions for the former Building 1 area. The

treatability studies EPA is considering will consist of a minimum of three additive mixtures from three vendors experienced in solidification/stabilization technology for comparable wastes. The additive mixtures and vendors would be selected based upon demonstrated past performance of solidification/stabilization technology to treat comparable wastes. Qualified testing laboratories would conduct the analysis associated with the treatability studies. The additive mixture to be employed would be approved by EPA and based upon an assessment of percent reduction in TCLP lead (i.e., effectiveness) measured in the treatability studies and implementability.

The anticipated alternative treatment standard would be based upon the lowest percent reduction with an appropriate margin of safety intended to account for the inevitable variability encountered during remedial work. Building 1 Remediation Wastes which comply with the alternative treatment standard would be transported to a secure chemical landfill. This final alternative treatment standard would be placed as an addendum into the final OARB LDR variance decision document.

The Agency requests comments on all aspects of this proposal by Friday, September 27, 2002. Comments should be submitted to:

Jim Sullivan
US EPA Region IX (WST-3)
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
Phone: 415-972-3309
FAX: 415-947-3530
E-mail: sullivan.james@epa.gov

The submitted petition is available at the following information repositories:

EPA RCRA Records Center
75 Hawthorne Street, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

Oakland Main Library
125 14th Street
Oakland, CA 94612

West Oakland Public Library
1801 Adeline Street
Oakland, CA 94607